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of Dr. Robert H. Lowie, Chairman, Dr. Ernst Riess, Mr. Stansbury Hagar, and Mr. Leo J. Frachtenberg. After securing the support of a number of local members of the American Folk-Lore Society and of others interested in folk-lore, the committee drew up a tentative Constitution. On February 16, 1909, the Chairman of the Committee called a meeting, at which the New York Branch was formally organized, with a membership of thirty. The Constitution and By-Laws prepared by the committee were amended and adopted, and the following officers were elected: *President*, Robert H. Lowie; *Vice-President*, Joseph Jacobs; *Secretary*, Leo J. Frachtenberg; *Treasurer*, Stansbury Hagar; *Executive Committee*, Franz Boas, Marshall H. Saville, E. W. Deming. *Leo J. Frachtenberg*, Secretary.

BOSTON BRANCH

The twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Boston Branch of the American Folk-Lore Society was observed on Friday, January 29, by a meeting in Hotel Vendôme. The President, Professor F. W. Putnam, gave an account of the history of the Branch, and paid a warm tribute to the memory of William Wells Newell, prime mover in the organization of the Society, and its general secretary until his death. Other speakers of the evening were Dr. Clarence J. Blake, Professor Crawford H. Toy, Professor Charles E. Fay, and Professor George L. Kittredge. In the twenty years of its existence the Boston Branch has held 116 stated meetings, the total number of papers read before the Branch was 123. Thirty of these treated of the North American Indian; six, of the natives of Central America; five each, of the Aleutians and Eskimo, and of China. Eleven papers were devoted to European folk-lore in America, and six to Negro folk-lore, with special attention to Negro music. Among other subjects discussed, the following may be mentioned: four papers each on Africa, Hawaii, Japan, and Buddhist customs; three on the gypsies; two papers each on the folk-lore of the following countries: Syria, Australia, Egypt, Greece, Italy, Scandinavia, Iceland, Russia, Turkey, Armenia, Arabia, Ireland, Scotland, and France. There was one paper each on the folk-lore of the French Canadians, the Philippine Islands, Central Asia, New Guinea, and the creoles of Jamaica. Two papers dealt with Shakespearian folk-lore, one with the street-cries of London.

Helen Leah Reed, Secretary.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DEPARTMENT

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE ELDER OR POETIC EDDA, commonly known as Sæmund's Edda. Part I. The Mythological Poems. Edited and translated, with introduction and notes, by OLIVE BRAY. Illustrated by W. G. Collingwood. Printed for the Viking Club. King's Weighhouse Club, London, 1908.

The title-page does not indicate the peculiar advantages of this translation of the Edda. In the first place, the introduction contains not only a brief ac-

count of the various manuscripts of the poems, and remarks in general on the Northern mythology, but also a full explanation and argument of each of the poems in the book. These aids are very desirable, and even necessary for one who is not more or less familiar with the poems in the original. More important still, the Old Norse text and the English translation are printed side by side on opposite pages throughout. This method, which has been sometimes used in the translation of classics from other languages, is by all means the most convenient. For one who has studied the original, it is of great assistance when he is looking up references; for one, too, who wishes to learn the original on his own account, it is of considerable help, in that it saves a great deal of time usually spent in thumbing a dictionary; and to one who is interested chiefly in getting at the ideas of the work, it gives constantly the opportunity of at least seeing these ideas clothed in their original dress.

The Old Norse text of this edition is based on that of Gering (Paderborn, 1904), but variant readings of important passages are given in footnotes. The text is accompanied by thirty-three excellent illustrations, which have the comparatively rare merit of really helping the reader to visualize the action and of suggesting the atmosphere of the poems.

The editor, departing from the order of the *Codex Regius*, puts the *Grimnismál* first, and the *Völuspá* last. This is an advisable change from the point of view of one approaching the *Edda* for the first time; for, though the *Grimnismál*, by reason of interpolations, is inferior to many of the other poems, yet, by giving very useful information concerning the life of the gods, it is valuable by way of explanation and introduction; and the *Völuspá*, difficult because of its allusive character, is appropriately placed last, in a position where the allusions become more intelligible.

The question whether the translation would not have been better in prose than in verse is more debatable. Certainly, a good line-for-line translation of any poem requires a great deal of skill and ingenuity; and when one tries, in addition, to maintain the rhythm and to suggest the alliteration of the original, the difficulties are multiplied. In this case the problem is solved more successfully than one would expect: the translation is everywhere perfectly intelligible and reads smoothly; and the lines and strophes opposite their originals make reference and comparison very easy.

The bibliographies of the manuscripts, texts, translations, glossaries, commentaries, and scholarly articles in periodicals, are valuable; the indexes of the Icelandic text and of the translation will also be found useful; and the paper, typography, binding, and general make-up of the volume are attractive and in good taste.

As stated in the introduction, the primary object of the book is to appeal "less to scholars and students than to all who have sufficient taste for mythology, and understanding of old lore, to recognize the truth and beauty which are not expressed in precisely the forms and language of to-day." Accordingly, both the general introduction and the more elaborate introductory explanations of the separate poems do not assume that the reader has a wide knowledge of the Old Norse literature or mythology. For the benefit of the general reader also, the editor has translated the proper names where possible; thus, for example, Odin's names *Grimer* and *Gangleri* appear as *Hood-Winker* and *Wanderer*. To one familiar with Old Norse, this translation of proper names may seem unnecessary, and perhaps undesirable; but it is quite

consistent with the general aim of the book, which is, as already stated, to serve primarily those not familiar with the original.

The translator's chief aim, then, was to introduce the uninitiated to the mysteries of the Northern mythology and to the beauties of the Eddic poems. One may say that on the whole this object has been attained, and, furthermore, that not only for the general reader, but also for the student of Old Norse, the work is of positive value. It is to be hoped that the translator will proceed in the same manner with the heroic poems of the Edda.

On page 322, for "brother's" read "brothers."

J. W. Rankin.

SOCIAL CONDITION, BELIEFS, AND LINGUISTIC RELATIONSHIP OF THE TLINGIT INDIANS. By JOHN R. SWANTON. (Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Washington, 1908, pp. 391-485.)

This paper embodies a portion of the material collected by Dr. Swanton during an expedition to Sitka and Wrangell. Perhaps the most important theoretical point made by the author is the establishment of a remote affinity between the Haida and Tlingit languages. This conclusion is stated with considerable caution. Swanton insists on the existence of great differences, and regards an indirect relationship, through differentiation from a common ancestral Athapascan tongue, as a possibility to be reckoned with (p. 485). The linguistic section apart, it is difficult to select for consideration any special points, without undue neglect of equally valuable data. The following details are therefore offered merely to direct attention to a few features of general interest. The Tlingit were separated into two exogamic phratries with maternal descent. One phratry was known as Raven in all the geographical divisions; the other was usually called Wolf, and in the north also Eagle. Each phratry was subdivided into clans, usually deriving their name from some town or camp they had once occupied, but constituting social rather than local divisions, as a clan might be distributed among two or more geographical groups. The clans were again divided into house groups, the members of which occupied one or several houses. An interesting anomaly is presented by the Nexa'di clan of the Sanya division. This group stands outside of the phratric moieties, intermarriage with either being permissible. The segmentation of each tribe into two sides is of fundamental importance, affecting every-day life in many of its phases. Thus it was the duty of every one to practise unbounded hospitality in the case of a member of the same phratry; attendants on women in labor were chosen from the opposite phratry; and for the mourning feasts only members of the side complementary to that of the mourners were invited. Unlike the Haida, among whom the feast given to the opposite phratry on a relative's death was overshadowed by a chief's potlatch to his own moiety, the Tlingit practised the potlatch observances exclusively for the sake of dead fellow-clansmen, and with the exclusive participation of the opposite phratry in the reception of property, the erection of mortuary houses or poles, and the esoteric performances appropriate to the occasion. The visiting phratry was divided into two temporarily antagonistic parties, eager to discover flaws in each other's conduct, and easily embroiled in serious quarrels. Imitations of crest animals were in order; and secret-society dances, though less important than among the Tsimshian and Kwa-